

**CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
CITY OF WATERTOWN
November 10, 2008
7:00 P.M.**

MAYOR JEFFREY E. GRAHAM PRESIDING

PRESENT: **COUNCIL MEMBER JOSEPH M. BUTLER, JR.
COUNCIL MEMBER JEFFREY M. SMITH
MAYOR GRAHAM**

ALSO PRESENT: **CITY MANAGER MARY M. CORRIVEAU**

ABSENT: **COUNCIL MEMBER ROXANNE M. BURNS
COUNCIL MEMBER PETER L. CLOUGH**

Presentations –

Watertown City Center – Patrick M. Donegan, Vision Development Inc.

Mr. Donegan updated Council on progress being made in the Watertown City Center plaza. He noted that there has been \$10 million in new construction and 80 jobs created. Mr. Donegan pointed out that since the number of businesses have increased, the plaza is reaching maximum sewer capacity. He said that come spring, he is hoping to make plans to include several more businesses in the plaza and in order to do so needs the City's help with additional sewer capacity. Mr. Donegan suggested connecting the sewer line from Arsenal Street to Gaffney Drive through the Stateway Plaza.

Mayor Graham noted that it would be a difficult project given the current financial situation but suggested devising a pump station in the Stateway Plaza.

Mr. Hauk told Council that the existing pump station on Gaffney Drive is on its last legs.

Mrs. Corriveau said that the City is pursuing moving some capacity to Coffeen Street to increase the capacity on Arsenal Street.

Council Member Smith asked about the best way to add capacity in the plaza.

Mr. Hauk replied that either digging deep to get to the Arsenal Street line or pumping up Gaffney Drive to Coffeen Street would add capacity.

Mayor Graham noted that this is a high priority for something in the heart of a commercial area and asked if a recommendation should be made by an outside party.

Mr. Hauk replied that the City can do that but recommended looking at the budget priorities.

Mrs. Corriveau asked how many lift stations are in the City.

Michael Sligar, Chief Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator, told Council that there are eight throughout the City.

Council Member Butler inquired if there is a pump station somewhere in the City that could be compared to the one that would be in the plaza.

Mr. Sligar commented that he cannot quote any numbers at the moment but said the pump stations run the gamut of capacities.

Council Member Smith asked about the cost of maintaining the pump stations.

Mr. Sligar noted that they are not broken up into separate accounts.

Mrs. Corriveau added that the Arsenal Street line does need some relief in order for further development to occur.

Council and staff continue to discuss the sewage lines through the Stateway Plaza and billing.

Council Member Butler said that if a sewage line is built in the direction of Gaffney Drive then an easement is needed from the Stateway Plaza owners.

Mayor Graham asked if information could be gathered for Council on pump station options.

Zone Changes – Northeast Sector, City Planning Board Members

Kenneth Mix, Planning & Community Development Coordinator, presented to Council the existing zoning map and proposed zoning changes for the northeast portion of Watertown.

Mayor Graham inquired if the proposal requires rewriting descriptions and changing zones.

Mr. Mix said that it is worth taking a look at what is called light industry and heavy industry.

Council and staff discuss the property located at 804 Pearl Street, noting that it cannot be lived in.

Council Member Butler asked about the difference between Residential A, B and C.

Mr. Mix said that Res. A is single family homes; Res. B is one to three family homes, and Res. C is one to three family homes, multi-family homes and limited doctors' offices.

Mayor Graham commented that there is a lot of good in this proposal and suggested considering phasing out businesses in residential neighborhoods through the rethinking of light and heavy industrial zones.

When staff and Council discuss property on and around Pearl Street, Mayor Graham noted that he owns property in the area and may have to recuse himself and will defer to the board of ethics or the City Attorney prior to any vote on the matter.

Mayor Graham asked what the next step is in the process, noting that he does not want to see the Flower/Fasset Street areas held up and should be resolved as soon as possible.

Mr. Mix replied that they will look at what areas to divide into Residential A, B and C and review the industrial district.

Mayor Graham inquired if the Open Space/Recreation Zone is subject to state approval.

Mr. Mix noted that park land is such if used for that purpose or designated.

Council Member Butler asked if residents in these neighborhoods will be notified by mail.

An unidentified woman in the audience expressed concern if residents will have a say in the zone changes.

Mayor Graham replied that there will be public notices sent and public hearings reserved during Council meetings.

Draft Long Term Control Plan, Combined Sewer Overflows, Phase 1 – Michael J. Sligar

Mr. Sligar reviewed with Council a presentation showing several slides and charts including maps of Watertown showing the sewer districts and basins.

Council Member Smith asked about the size of the basins.

Mr. Sligar said they are 10 to 1000 acres. He noted that 35% of the combined sewers are in the Kelsey Creek basin and 56% of the combined sewers are in the Engine Street basin. Mr. Sligar pointed out that the capital project will move a portion of the pipes currently located in the Kelsey Creek out of it, to reduce infiltration by up to 150 million gallons per year. He also reviewed the total cost for storm installation work and street reconstruction, noting that the total would exceed \$50 million.

Mrs. Corriveau reminded Council that a public hearing has been scheduled on this topic and this presentation offers Council further background information.

Mr. Sligar expressed to Council his wish that they use money wisely by putting it toward sewer separation.

Council Member Smith asked if a separation pipe can be run within the existing larger pipes.

Mr. Hauk said that it depends on the depth of the current sewer line.

Mr. Sligar told Council that a citizen advisory committee was formed in 2002 and has assisted in the completion of the Long Term Control Plan. He added that in October the committee approved three recommendations including accepting the report as a factual representation of the City's combined sewer system, accepting four summarized impairments to the sewer system that were identified and focus the limited capital funds on combined sewer separation projects.

Mrs. Corriveau said that the group has a very good understanding of the presentation and that Council will also have a contract for the design of the northside trunk section.

Mr. Hauk added that infiltration problems will be remedied by adding a lining system to eliminate all joints. He said similar systems are in use already.

Staff Reports –

Sale of City of Owned Property – James Mills, City Comptroller

Mayor Graham commented that many vacant lots have been sold but then unfortunately have reverted back to City ownership. He noted that several of those lots are awkward slivers of land.

Mr. Mills reviewed the list of properties for sale.

Mayor Graham asked about the possibility of combining lots not usable for building separately.

Mr. Mills noted that a lot of the properties are on paper streets.

Mayor Graham asked if there has been any luck in selling to contiguous property owners.

Mrs. Corriveau replied that the land is not accessible. She suggested keeping a list of the properties up for sale on the City's website with a map showing their location rather than going through all the administrative work in trying to continually sell the properties.

Mayor Graham suggested only including in the auction the properties that are accessible and viable and advertise those but during the auction reminding potential buyers that they can still purchase the other inaccessible properties.

Mrs. Corriveau said that a list of properties will be put together to go before Council.

Council Member Butler inquired about the status of 523 Jefferson Street.

Mrs. Corriveau said that the home is up for demolition and the City's DPW crews will look at it to determine whether or not they can demolish it.

Council Member Butler asked about getting an estimate before demolition.

Mrs. Corriveau reminded Council that she and Mr. Mills will be attending a town hall meeting in Syracuse with Gov. Paterson on Tuesday, November 11, 2008, regarding state budget cuts and asked if Council would like anything mentioned or had any questions.

Meeting ended at 9:20 p.m.

Amanda C. Lewis
Deputy City Clerk